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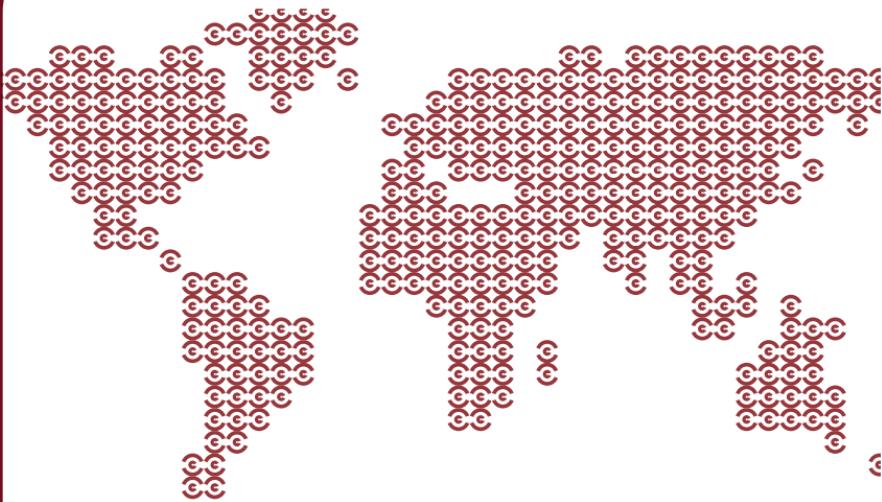
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FOR THOSE ABOUT TO PITCH...

Welcome to *realscreen*'s first Global Pitch Guide, a pocket-sized compendium designed to give producers and content sellers the information they need to make effective pitches to key international factualcasters. Not only did we harass scores of commissioning editors and programming and acquisition execs from around the world to let us know what they're looking for, we also managed to procure contact info, pitching dos and don'ts, and even budget figures on occasion. I deeply thank all the buyers who took the time out to deal with our persistent inquiries (some of whom even responded to us while on vacation!), and while there are more that we would've loved to have had take part, I suppose there will always be next year.

As you prepare to take on the markets in the year ahead, it's our hope that this handbook will give you an edge when it comes to getting your hard work seen by those who count. Be sure to have it with you when you attend the *Realscreen* Summit this year, where many of these buyers will also be on hand to chat with producers during our trademark 30 Minutes With sessions. And feel free to pass along any feedback on the Global Pitch Guide — as mentioned, this is our first year in rolling it out and we aim to improve it as we move forward.

Stay tuned for our September/October issue when it drops on September 24, and we'll see you at the markets.

Cheers,

Barry Walsh, editor, *realscreen*

realscreen

The best in non-fiction ►►

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A&E NETWORK ▶



ROB SHARENOW, SVP, NON-FICTION & ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMMING

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

There is an emphasis on the 'real' in reality at A&E, the home to a wide-range of non-fiction programming such as documentary series *Intervention* and *Hoarders*, crime and justice series such as *The First 48* and *Manhunters*, and character-driven series including *Dog the Bounty Hunter*, *Billy the Exterminator*, *Steven Seagal: Lawman* and *Gene Simmons Family Jewels*. "We really try to stay ahead of the curve and as a result we are fairly open to anything that feels truly fresh and original," says Sharenow. "That said, I think authenticity and human drama need to be at the core of what we do." Sharenow says the connecting thread between all of A&E's non-fiction offerings is that they depict real people in their real worlds; hence the network's "Real Life" tagline.

A&E programs approximately 300 hours of original content for primetime, 50 hours for daytime, and 160 hours of original content for Bio Channel. Nearly all of A&E's primetime is original commissioned content. "For

A&E we produce 20 series for primetime per year, plus four to five for daytime," he says. "For Bio Channel we will produce approximately 10 original series per season."

WHAT HE'S NOT LOOKING FOR:

Sharenow says that they are not really a comedy network and that shows can be funny, but they should always evolve out of a more naturalistic place.

HOW TO PITCH:

Every pitch requires different materials. "If you are pitching a format, paper is fine. If you are pitching a world, you need to have specific access agreements worked out for that world or don't bother to bring it in," says Sharenow. The same can be said for talent. "Never pitch anyone you don't have a relationship with," he advises. If the pitch is completely character dependent, Sharenow strongly recommends having tape of the characters.

A&E prefers to have pitches come through legitimate agencies, but is open to non-represented pitches, providing a release is signed. Contact development executives through their assistants: Neil Cohen through barbara.clews@aetn.com; Scott Lonker and Laura Fleury through laurie.sharpe@aetn.com; and Elaine Frontain Bryant through crystal.scott@aetn.com. ■

ANIMAL PLANET ►



RICK HOLZMAN, SVP PROGRAMMING AND SCHEDULING

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Presently, Animal Planet is exploring more in the original fiction area, but for the most part, it is a factual entertainment and natural history network. The net mostly commissions its 300 hours of programming, with a small amount of big blue-chip natural history coproductions. Holzman says that Animal Planet has a "very strong editorial point of view," which means less acquisitions and lots of involvement in commissions.

The network is currently focusing on blue-chip natural history programs, one in every quarter, with an aim towards reinventing the traditional natural history genre. Another growth area is "character-based shows that feature larger than life characters like *Pit Boss* and *Pit Bulls and Parolees*," says Holzman. Personal, dramatic stories about human-animal interaction, such as *Confessions: Animal Hoarding*, *The Haunted* and *I Shouldn't Be Alive* are also working. All programming should appeal to a target age demo of 25-54 with a slight female skew.

There's also an animal issues strand called 'Animal Planet Investigates' which has taken on puppy mills and dog fighting. For the most part, the network is looking for series of six to 10 episodes.

PRICE:

It ranges from \$250,000 to \$800,000 an hour for big ideas. "The idea sets the price point," he says.

HOW TO PITCH:

Producers have to register at the Producers Portal (<https://producers.discovery.com/producersPortal/registration/registration.jsf>). Animal Planet doesn't take unsolicited pitches for myriad reasons, but once someone is registered, producers can contact the co-vice presidents of development, Marc Etkind (marc_etkind@discovery.com) and Charlie Foley (charlie_foley@discovery.com) and director of development, Sara Helman (sara_helman@discovery.com). Pitches come in every sort of form, from one-liners to fully pre-formed demo tapes and pilots. "The more information the better, but what we're really looking for are the worlds and characters, both human and animal," says Holzman.

WHERE TO FIND HIM:

Realscreen Summit, MIPDOC, MIPCOM, Wildscreen, BBC's Brighton markets and many more. ■■

“What we're
really looking
for are the
worlds and the
characters”

BRAVO ▶

**ELI LEHRER, VP DEVELOPMENT****WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:**

Lehrer says Bravo's audience researchers have broken down the NBC Universal-owned cable net into various groups, with the two core segments being the "Will & Gracers" (affluent, cosmopolitan, mostly single) and the "PTA Trendsetters" (suburban, more moms in the group, still tapped in to pop culture). "Whatever shows we're developing, we always look at them and see how they will speak to one or both of those core groups, and if it doesn't feel like the character or the format or the general world the show is set in will resonate with them, then it's unlikely we're going to move forward," he says. Programming falls into five "affinity groups": food, fashion, beauty, design and pop culture. Much of what airs on Bravo is character-driven.

As for series vs. one-offs, Lehrer says that while Bravo will take pitches for one-offs, "it's unlikely we'll move forward [in] developing a project if it can't easily be turned into an ongoing series."

HOW TO PITCH:

With so much of its programming being character-driven, Lehrer says Bravo is decidedly pro-tape. "You can write the world's best treatment and episode outline, but if we can't see how your characters play on screen then it's hard to get people excited," he

says. Format shows benefit from tape, he says, as "seeing the personality driving the show helps give us an understanding of what the tone, voice and point of view of the show will be." Lehrer says he's even seeing more competition pitches made with five to 10 minutes of tape.

Pitches can be made to Bravo's dev team in New York and L.A. Isolate the projects you have in your arsenal that are most relevant to Bravo. And for God's sake, run a spell check through your treatments before handing them in. "This may sound slightly petty, but submitting a treatment that isn't well put together — badly written, filled with typos, badly formatted, whatever — is a red flag from the start," he says. "It's hard to feel confident investing money in a producer and a project if the initial treatment isn't well executed."

WHERE TO FIND HIM:

"We always send people to Realscreen Summit and NATPE," he says, and with more activity brewing in the format sphere, MIPCOM is coming back onto Bravo's radar as well. ■

“A treatment that isn’t well put together is a red flag from the start”

DISCOVERY CHANNEL ▶

WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR:

The Discovery Channel is made up of almost 100% commissioned or coproduced programming and is currently looking at a "series-based strategy with specials that are truly special — probably about four tentpole special events a year."

"We like to be first into new genres," say Reverand and Andreae, and they cite as examples *The Colony* as a social experiment with brains and balls and *Pitchmen* as an entry into the invention space. "Category-killing miniseries" such as *Life* and *Into the Universe with Stephen Hawking* are also priorities. "Overall, smart concepts, authentic characters, a high energy approach, and world-class storytelling will continue to be our hallmarks."

With an age demo tending to fall into 25 to 54, Discovery trends more male, but they say that co-viewing among men and women has climbed an impressive amount with this season's *Deadliest Catch*, partly due to Original Productions' "sensitive and thoughtful treatment" of the passing of series star Captain Phil Harris.

Discovery Channel is backing away from one-offs and is turning its attention to event specials, miniseries and returnable series with the potential to become network-defining brands. Series volumes range from orders of six to 20 or more. The network is also always in the market for good coproduction partners.

HOW TO PITCH:

Submissions should be made through the Producers Submissions Portal (<https://producers.discovery.com/producersPortal/registration/registration.jsf>). Reverand is on the East Coast and Andreae is in L.A., and each SVP has a strong development team. They like to see a brief outline and tape isn't a must have, but it helps.

PITCHING DON'TS:

Don't misrepresent your access.



SIMON ANDREAE, SVP OF DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION, WEST COAST



STEPHEN REVERAND, SVP OF DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION, EAST COAST

WHERE TO FIND THEM:

Realscreen Summit, MIPCOM, Wildscreen, World Congress of Science and Factual Producers (WCSFP). ■

DIY >

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

The Scripps Networks-owned home improvement channel is made up of about 95% commissioned programming relating to the home and home transformation. "We are developing character-driven docu-soaps, makeovers and magazine-style series and specials," says Singer. Think renovation and construction vs. decorating and design.

The network looks for informational programming that is exciting and fun. "We generally do not take a serious tone," says Singer. "Though our voice seems masculine, we tend to have a pretty balanced audience, with a slight male skew." DIY targets adults 25 plus, and successful series include *Yard Crashers*, *Bathtastic!*, *Kitchen Impossible*, *Man Caves*, and *10 Grand In Your Hand*. Singer says that generally they stay away from green, child and animal-focused programs, as well as programs with a philanthropic theme.

Typically, the network commissions orders of five to eight episodes on new series, and generally programs are 30 minutes. Once a series clicks, the order increases to 13 to 26 at a time. DIY also deals in a limited amount of 60-minute one-offs.

HOW TO PITCH:

Watch the network. One-sheets are usually fine, but tape helps sell a concept. Producers are asked to sign a release and suppliers can contact Steven Lerner (slerner@diynetwork.com) and Danny Tepper (dtepper@diynetwork.com).

MARKETS:

Find him at Realscreen Summit, Factual Entertainment Forum and WestDoc. ||



ANDY SINGER, VP OF PROGRAMMING

“ We have a pretty balanced audience with a slight male skew ”

LIFETIME ►

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

Lifetime joined the AETN fold last year, and McCarthy came on board quite recently from her previous post as SVP development and production for Discovery Channel. She says it's "a triple threat network. Dramatic original scripted series and movies have always anchored Lifetime — a vibrantly entertaining alternative strand adds that third weapon to our programming arsenal."

McCarthy says its female-skewing audience "loves to laugh, loves to cry and always wants to be entertained." She wants great characters and compelling stories from "intelligent, creative producers." Currently, *Project Runway* is its best-known unscripted series, and McCarthy adds that "a diverse range of entertaining new series will soon join this hit."

HOW TO PITCH:

"Treatments, demo reels, blurbs or calls are welcome," says McCarthy. Contact her via email

(Gena.McCarthy@aetn.com), or Lifetime's VPs of alternative and reality David Hillman (David.Hillman@aetn.com) or Sandy Varo (Sandy.Varo@aetn.com). As for what not to do, McCarthy implores producers to treat the network with an open mind. "Don't self-edit yourself before reaching out to us," she says. "I hate it when producers don't share amazing ideas with us based on preconceived notions. We love listening to a broad range of concepts, and enjoy working with you to find that next, unexpected hit." ■



GENA MCCARTHY, SVP REALITY & ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMMING (PIC: MATHIEU FRETSCHEL/MAT FRETSCHEL PHOTOGRAPHY)

“We love listening to a broad range of concepts... to find that next hit”

MTV ▶

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

"Right now, what our audience wants in factual/reality TV is authenticity, a more cinema-vérité approach," says DiSanto. Concepts that feel overproduced or formatted do not work. He adds that the network has moved away from reality series on the costlier end, in order to make room for scripted and animation. Reality hits that fit the new scheme are *Teen Mom*, *16 & Pregnant* and *Jersey Shore*.

MTV looks to commission 220 original hours in primetime and 200 hours in other dayparts. The target demo is 12 to 24 year olds, with a balance tipping toward females; however, some of the hit programming, like *Jersey Shore*, goes broader in terms of male/female splits and hits the 25-34 demo as well.

DiSanto says MTV doesn't discuss financials, but "our reality programming is now about \$350K-650K per hour."

He says that one-offs are hard to get behind promotionally since it is hard to divert resources from series; however, MTV is experimenting with specials and films that are tied either to calendar events (holidays), series franchises or topicality. The network is also "absolutely open" to coproductions for the right ideas.

WHO TO PITCH TO:

It depends on the genre or format. Liz Gateley is the department head for primetime programming and daytime strips, and deals mostly in reality. Dave Sirulnick is the department head for documentary series, while Steve Tseckares is the head of studio-based series and topical programming.

HOW NOT TO PITCH:

"Don't pitch us shows that are a version of, or inspired by, something on our air," he says. When things work for MTV, the network wants to move to the "next thing" rather than see more of the same. "And unless there is a tremendous twist, things seen on other networks don't work for us." //



TONY DISANTO, PRESIDENT OF PROGRAMMING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR MTV

“ Don’t pitch us shows that are a version of, or inspired by, something on our air ”

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

The recent announcement of a new programming and development structure at National Geographic Channel (NGC) and National Geographic Channels International (NGCI) means that content is being sought on a global scale. "That means we've been able to combine our finances and resources to make the plays we want to," says Whalen. "And that will put us in the position to do more series, which is very important to us." Series such as *Locked Up Abroad*, *Taboo* and *Alaskan State Troopers* have done well for NGC and point to a direction the net wants to explore further. Strands still play a role in NGC programming: 'Inside' serves as an incubator for series (*Alaskan State Troopers* sprang from here), while 'Naked Science' provides anthology-style science shows. And let's not forget 'National Geographic Presents,' which houses the ambitious, higher profile specials such as *Waking the Baby Mammoth* and *Giant Crystal Cave*.

The audience for the net skews slightly male and loves detail and information, so the programming has to go deep and avoid skimming the surface of topics. Excellent storytelling, visuals and new information are the hallmarks of NGC programming.

HOW TO PITCH:

"Don't overbake your pitch," advises Whalen. "It should be a conversation and a dialogue, and a one-pager is a good place to start." Tape is also a plus — "It really helps a project get to the top of the pile when it has a great demo." Be sure to hit www.ngcideas.com, as that's the entry point from which the NGC development team plucks pitches.

WHAT THEY PAY:

Whalen says NGC is "very competitive" when it comes to paying for the sort of programming it needs.

MARKETS:

The Realscreen Summit, MIPCOM, MIPTV, WCSFP, Jackson Hole/Wildscreen and WestDoc. ■



**BRIDGET WHALEN, VICE PRESIDENT,
DEVELOPMENT, COPRODUCTIONS AND
ACQUISITIONS**

“ It really helps a project get to the top of the pile when it has a great demo ”

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC WILD ▶



JANET HAN VISSERING, SVP, STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AND CO-FINANCE, NGCI

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

The U.S. version of Nat Geo Wild launched in March of this

year. Thus, says Han Vissering, while its tone is evolving, its focus on wildlife not only differentiates it from the wider focus of NGC, but it also provides more opportunities for producers in that genre. "I know that with the yellow border, people may have some preconceived notions about us," she says. "But don't edit for us — bring all of your ideas and let us help you frame those ideas into a National Geographic show."

HOW TO PITCH:

All ideas should be submitted through www.ngcideas.com. From there they go to the development team (Shannon Malone, Mike Mavretic, Anna Annalora and Diana el-Osta). A concise one-pager with a small paragraph about what sets your project apart from others in the field will do, and for talent-oriented pitches, tape is "an absolute must." With the new programming structure, shows that make the grade can be slotted into NGC, NGCI and Wild "as a full commission, a coproduction, a pre-sale or acquisition," she says.

WHAT THEY PAY:

Per-hour varies but can be in the six-figure range. ■

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OXYGEN ►

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

"Our tagline is 'Live out loud' so we're looking for loud, boisterous characters," says Introcaso-Davis. Oxygen targets women in the 18-34 demo, "who are living life on their own terms." Introcaso-Davis cites Oxygen's competition series *Dance Your Ass Off* and *Tori & Dean: Home Sweet Hollywood* as good examples of the net's fun tone. Oxygen now has two nights of original programming and Introcaso-Davis says, "We'll be increasing even further." Series volumes range from six to 13 eps. "Tape is great, especially if you're pitching characters."

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Don't be unfamiliar with the brand. Introcaso-Davis recommends spending ample time at www.oxygen.com and www.oxygenlive.com, the net's "real-time water cooler" that enables fans to interact with their favorite Oxygen shows via chats. Also, don't cold call. Oxygen prefers pitches to come from agents and/or lawyers



AMY INTROCASO-DAVIS, SVP ORIGINAL PROGRAMMING AND DEVELOPMENT

working with production clients. Lastly, and importantly, "Don't try to make me buy it in the room."

WHERE TO FIND HER:

Realscreen Summit, NATPE, occasionally at the MIPs. ■■■

PBS ►

WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR:

America's Public Broadcasting System has a very comprehensive producer-oriented site at <http://www.pbs.org/producers>, detailing not only how to go about pitching projects to PBS, but also what it's looking for. As PBS' mission in public broadcasting is "to inspire, inform and educate," it compels producers to be aware of its content priorities to see if what they have on hand fits the bill. Ob-docs and biographies such as those seen on *American Masters* are part of the PBS picture, as is science programming a la the strand 'NOVA', history programming as seen in series such as 'American Experience' or Ken Burns and Lynn Novick's *The War*, arts and culture programming such as *Art in the Twenty-First Century*, news and public affairs as seen in the strands 'Need to Know' and 'Frontline' and independent film showcases such as 'P.O.V.' and 'Independent Lens.'

For factual programming, PBS maintains that proposals should adhere to the above content priorities and strive

to provide accurate, responsible information that can be backed up by testimony from historians, scientists or experts in whichever field is being explored. Ob-docs should match narrative programming's attention to drama and character development. When it comes to cultural programming, PBS says arts docs need to be accessible to a broad audience but should also put their subjects in a historical and cultural context. Showing the "process behind artistic endeavors" is also attractive to PBS.

HOW TO PITCH:

Continuing series and anthologies make up 80% of PBS' primetime schedule. Keep in mind that if you're interested in pitching a project for a particular series, then submissions need to go to the producers of that series. A full list of producer stations for assorted PBS programming can be found at http://www.pbs.org/search/search_contacts.html. PBS does not forward submissions to existing series.

PBS (CONTINUED) ▶

For other project proposals, visit <http://www.pbs.org/producers/proposal.html>. Here you'll find the release form and informational summary sheet that needs to accompany each proposal. PBS also asks that you submit a brief synopsis, a treatment, episodic descriptions for series, a project timetable, any interactive elements, a budget including an itemized list of costs as well as info on any funding partners, information about key personnel, a business plan for the project and sample work.

And for those submitting completed programs, PBS needs a VHS or DVD copy, a synopsis, detailed funding info, an indication of rights available, interactive elements, a list of any "problematic content" (language, nudity, etc.) and any other relevant information.

Submissions can be mailed or faxed to Steven Gray, vice president, program development & editorial management at PBS Headquarters, 2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA 22202. Fax: (703) 739-5295. ■■

▶▶ PBS' mission in public broadcasting is to "inspire, inform and educate"

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RETIREMENT LIVING TV (RLTV) ►

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

RLTV's age demo is 50-plus, skewing female. This year RLTV commissioned/produced 106 hours of original content. Jacobson predicts a 50/50 split between commissions and acquisitions by 2011. "We are looking for programming that doesn't just appeal to our demo, it should also involve and include them," says Jacobson. The price range for RLTV commissions, from low to high end, is \$60K - \$260K. One-offs aren't a focus but will be considered. Series run 10-13 eps. RLTV is also interested in copro.

HOW TO PITCH:

There is a formal pitching process that requires the signing of a release and certain format requirements. The RLTV team will look at both fully developed shows with bibles or brief outlines. Tape is not needed, but it can help with talent pitches. Contact Kristin Culverwell, director of programming - kculverwell@rltv.com.



ELLIOT JACOBSON, SVP, PROGRAMMING AND PRODUCTION

WHERE TO FIND HIM:

Realscreen Summit, MIPDOC, MIPCOM, Banff, Factual Entertainment Forum, WestDoc, NATPE. ■■

SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL ►

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Smithsonian Channel has recently entered a major distribution deal with Comcast which will expand the audience over the next year. Presently, the channel is commissioning about 30 original hours and 40 hours of coproductions. One-offs and series are both part of the mix. The channel has a number of recurring strands including 'Inside the Music,' 'Women in Science,' 'History & Mystery' and 'War Stories.' Acquisitions, which make up about 30% of the programming, need to be all HD and entirely new to the American television audience.

"We are always looking for entertaining programs about popular culture, and especially music," says Royle. They are not, however, looking for concert films. Other areas of interest include natural history, science, aviation, art, music, astronomy and history.

Smithsonian is always looking for new coproductions and partners, after successfully coproducing with BBC's 'Timewatch,' and broadcasters including Channel 4, Five, Discovery Canada, ARTE, ZDF, ORF and NHK.



DAVID ROYLE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAMMING & PRODUCTION

HOW TO PITCH:

After filling out Smithsonian's submission form, found on smithsonianchannel.com, producers should send a succinct proposal to the head of development, Chris Hoelzl, at c.hoelzl@smithsoniannetworks.com. ■■

SPIKE TV ▶

WHAT HE IS LOOKING FOR:

Spike wants original series to complement the line-up of male-skewing series, which include *Deadliest Warrior*, *The Ultimate Fighter*, *1000 Ways to Die*, *Pros vs. Joes*, and late night comedy series *MANswers*. Spike is made up of 75% original programming in primetime. "We always make room for quality, distinctive original programming from a guy point-of-view," says Weinstock.

The network is willing to look into coproductions if the project resonates with Spike.

HOW TO PITCH:

Weinstock recommends producers go through an agent or attorney. Once you've got the network's attention, producers should know that Spike is looking for fresh, creative ideas that resonate with male audiences aged 18 to 49. As for what not to do, Weinstock advises against trying to pitch recycled ideas and unfamiliarity with the brand.



**JOE WEINSTOCK, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT,
ORIGINAL SERIES**

MARKETS:

Worldwide markets. ▶▶

THE STYLE NETWORK ▶

WHAT SHE IS LOOKING FOR:

Buchanan says Comcast-owned The Style Network is looking for "series with strong, unique, stand-out personalities with an irreverent tone." Programming that relates to the home, body image and weddings are also good fits. Food, travel and dating aren't.

Style acquires and commissions original programming at a ratio of 25% and 75% respectively. Style's target demo is women, aged 18 to 49.

Style has four key destination nights for reality and format series, Monday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sundays. Buchanan adds, "We're looking for distinct, stand-out shows for our daytime and afternoon dayparts." For new series, Style typically orders in eight to 10 episodes.

HOW TO PITCH:

Style mainly accepts pitches through represented producers and talent. Producers should contact Grace Borrero in the Development and New Series group (gborrero@stylenetwork.com).



**KATIE BUCHANAN, VP, PROGRAMMING &
ACQUISITIONS**

All types of material are accepted. Tape's recommended. You'll need to sign a submission release.

WHERE TO FIND HER:

Realscreen Summit, NATPE, MIPTV and MIPCOM, Banff and WestDoc. ▶▶

SUNDANCE CHANNEL ▶

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Klein says Sundance Channel is looking to launch 12 original series in 2011. The Sundance audience, says Klein, is composed of creative individuals that are forward looking and early adopters, in the 25-54 age demo with a slight female skew. Thus, the programming needs to be emotionally immersive. If talent is involved it needs to be credible, and situations need to be authentic. Lastly, "Our audience experiences what ideas, people and things are just on the horizon," says Klein. "Our programming is always on the right part of the wave, just before it crests." Sundance is only looking for series, preferably aimed at the 35-54 demo.

HOW TO PITCH:

Sundance Channel doesn't accept unsolicited pitches. Credited producers and/or their agents can contact Lizzie Kerner, manager of programming and



**MICHAEL KLEIN, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
ORIGINAL PROGRAMMING AND DEVELOPMENT**

development, at Lizzie.Kerner@sundancechannel.com.

MARKETS: Realscreen Summit, MIP, MIPCOM,
Sundance Film Festival, Toronto Intl. Film Festival. ■■

SYFY ▶

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Following its rebrand in 2008, niche is no longer a key word for the net, with its audience being pretty evenly split between men and women, and the 18-49 and 25-54 age demos finding something to connect with on the schedule. On the alternative side, Krubsack says Syfy is looking for series only, but those series can encompass anything within the reality spectrum. While shows such as *Ghost Hunters* and its spin-offs have provided the net with a strong presence in paranormal programming, "all other reality genres — cooking, dance, dating, makeover, docuseries — that incorporate imagination and creativity" are in the mix for Syfy. "Words that describe our programming include aspirational, adventurous, immersive, experiential, educational, extraordinary, emotional, and transformative," he offers.

WHAT HE'S NOT LOOKING FOR:

"Fan-boy" programming, or subject matter that's too literally science fiction-oriented, isn't required. "Our



**TIM KRUBSACK, VP ALTERNATIVE
PROGRAMMING**

programming is also blue sky, not dark," says Krubsack. "The shows should be fun, not grim." ■■

HOW TO PITCH:

Pitches must come through a recognized agency or lawyer, or a submission release form must be signed. ■■



WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

The family-friendly network offers a variety of programming genres, so Cheskin suggests producers watch the network and use its website (www.tlc.com) and then develop shows that would play with the current line-up. TLC skews towards adult females, as can be seen in a list of its hits: *Cake Boss*; *19 Kids and Counting*; *The Little Couple*; *Toddlers and Tiaras*; *Police Women of...; Say Yes To The Dress*; *What Not to Wear* and *Kate Plus B.*

TLC is looking for one-off specials, pilots, limited and on-going series. Series orders vary on a case by case basis. The network coproduces regularly.

TLC does not discuss pricing, but Cheskin offers, "I will say we are willing to pay what a show is worth to us. It varies and is based on a number of different factors including what is the appropriate budget for this type of show, how do we think it will rate, and its value to our ad sales team."

HOW TO PITCH:

Submissions should be made through the Producers Submissions Portal (<https://producers.discovery.com/producersPortal/registration/registration.jsf>). Brent Zacky heads up the West Coast development team, and Rita Mullin handles the East Coast.

Cheskin says they look at pitches in all forms, from brief outlines and one or two pages, to detailed bibles. "The more we know, the easier it is to make a decision," he says. Shows can get greenlit without seeing tape but in general, says Cheskin, pitches with video presentations and casting reels are more likely to move forward.



STEVEN CHESKIN, EVP PROGRAMMING

One topic tends to give the pitch a boost. "We always have a need for great families. At the heart of many of our top shows is the family dynamic," he says.

A big no-no when pitching to Cheskin is not knowing when to stop. "I personally don't appreciate when I say no to an idea and a producer or agent continues to sell me. If I'm not sure I will ask questions; if it's a no then take the no and move on," he says.

MARKETS:

A representative of the TLC development team is at all of the major markets. ■■■

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WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

"We're looking to evolve our successful programming in the areas of real people on the job and active non-crime investigations," says Campo. More specifically, the Turner-owned network is looking for a companion series for *Conspiracy Theory with Jesse Ventura*, great characters in the hunting and fishing worlds, and high-profile, high-concept series that will expand the truTV brand.

The majority of truTV's schedule is made up of returning series, so the network doesn't have a target for new hours. About 10% of its programming is acquired, so the focus is really on original programming.

Campo says the network targets a group they call 'Real Engagers,' which are men and women aged 35 to 44 who love programming featuring real people and real situations and elements of danger, conflict, competition, and humor. Some examples of that are high rating new series *All Worked Up*, *Full Throttle*, *Conspiracy Theory with Jesse Ventura* and *Southern Fried Stings*. Series orders generally start off as six or eight episodes and go up from there.

WHAT HE ISN'T LOOKING FOR:

TruTV is scaling back on developing shows that might too closely overlap with current successful series, such as *Rehab: Party at the Hard Rock Hotel* and *Operation Repo*. Crime and law enforcement programming are also low priorities as the net gets further into its rebrand. This network isn't looking for one-offs, and instead prefers that every pilot going into production has strong series potential.

HOW TO PITCH:

The best way to pitch is to contact one of the directors of development, Matt Gould or Paul Hardy (matt.gould@turner.com and paul.hardy@turner.com) and set a time for a meeting or phone pitch with them. A good idea can be pitched in a sentence or two, so a full show bible isn't necessary. It's best to avoid pitches that involve past-tense storytelling or overly contrived



DARREN CAMPO, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF PROGRAMMING, PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

set-ups as well as projects that are overly scientific or historic in nature. "Our audience loves being immersed in the moment so certain genres don't naturally lend themselves to this type of storytelling," he says.

MARKETS:

Realscreen Summit, Factual Entertainment Forum, NATPE, Banff, MIPTV, MIPCOM, and Hot Docs. ■

“ Our
audience
loves being
immersed in
the moment ”



THE DOCUMENTARY CHANNEL ►

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

The Nashville-based Documentary Channel, launched in 2006, currently only acquires films. Pearson's looking for mostly English-language docs with memorable characters, as well as docs featuring mysteries or unanswered questions, and sports and music docs.

"We're approached [at] every step of the documentary [process] from inception to finish line," says Pearson, adding that The Documentary Channel takes pitches for ideas in the treatment stage, rough cuts, or those in need of finishing funds.

HOW TO PITCH:

It's a small team, having recently added Dorothy Henckel as director of acquisitions. Outlines, treatments and trailers are preferred. Tape is not a must have. She also recommends having all rights clearances covered. Face to face time also helps.



**KATE PEARSON, SVP PROGRAMMING,
SCHEDULING AND ACQUISITIONS**

MARKETS:

Sundance, Tribeca, Hot Docs, IDFA, SXSW, MIPDOC, Big Sky, Full Frame to name a few. ■■

WEtv ►

WHAT IT'S LOOKING FOR:

Rainbow Media's WE tv targets women in the 18-49 age demo. The network says it's in the market for "big, loud, and promotable characters who take our viewers on a wild ride and celebrate all the unique stages of a woman's life." In terms of genres and subject matter, fresh takes on the wedding space and stories about unique families work well for the net. The ratio between acquired and original programming is 50/50. The net says it's always looking to coproduce for the right project, but primarily owns and controls its content worldwide.

HOW TO PITCH:

Hit www.wetv.com for the network's complete submission policy (scroll down to the bottom of the home page for the submissions link). Brief outlines and tapes are "crucial to our internal development process." And most importantly, make sure you have representation to facilitate the submission, as WE tv accepts pitches through lawyers and agents only.

MARKETS:

Realscreen Summit, MIPTV, MIPCOM, NATPE, WestDoc. ■

► The
network's in
the market for
"big, loud and
promotable
characters"

A FOCUS ON FACTUAL:

The amount of factual programming on CBC continues to grow every year, Bristow says, with the main nights for factual being Sunday and Monday. Sunday nights this fall will be devoted to the second, expanded season of *Battle of the Blades* and the new 8x60-minute home series *All For One* with Debbie Travis. Starting in January, Monday nights will be home to the new series *Village on a Diet*, which will see an entire town take on a fitness and weight-loss challenge. "In addition to the series in daytime and primetime, we have dozens of one-off specials in development and production at any given time," says Bristow.

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

The Canadian pubcaster looks for programming that will attract the broadest possible audience, with more than 50% of the channel's viewership falling into the 25-54 age demo.

"What works for CBC are large-scale social experiments like *The Week the Women Went* or *Village on a Diet*," says Bristow. "Live event television that brings the country together is a perfect fit for CBC TV."

While CBC does program one-offs, Bristow is looking for more repeatable series for primetime and daytime hours. For primetime, repeatable series of 10 hours or more work best for the channel. This will also be the first year CBC will be commissioning music and arts programming, says Bristow.

HOW TO PITCH:

Bristow would prefer producers send a one-page description of their program to Andrea Kadis, executive assistant, factual entertainment (factualpitch@cbc.ca). Bristow also regularly attends markets such as the Realscreen Summit, MIPTV and MIPCOM, the Banff World Television Festival and the LA TV Festival. More information on how and what to pitch is available through CBC's producer's site (www.cbc.ca/independentproducers). ■



JULIE BRISTOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
FACTUAL ENTERTAINMENT

“Live event TV that brings the country together is a perfect fit for CBC”

DISCOVERY CHANNEL CANADA ▶

HOW SHE COMMISSIONS:

Each year Ann Harbron and her team at Canada's Discovery Channel commission approximately 150 hours of programming. Most of that consists of new and returning series; however, there is also room on the channel for documentaries [1x120 minutes] which air in Discovery's doc slot 'Discovery Presents.' The channel does between 10 and 12 international coproductions for both series and specials per year. The most regular producing partners for Discovery come from the UK, France and Germany.

HOW TO PITCH:

Harbron says pitches have to have "our audiences' needs top of mind." That audience is mostly inquisitive males aged 25 to 54. She expects to see an organized and engaging three-to-five page document clearly defining the length, premise, context, story, settings, characters and/or hosts.

Additional pitching instructions for producers can be found at www.discoverychannel.ca/Article.aspx?aid=13726.



ANN HARBRON, DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING AND PRODUCTION

Pitches can be sent to Heather Williamson, manager, program development at heather.williamson@ctv.ca or mailed to Williamson's attention at 9 Channel Nine Court, Scarborough, Ontario, M1S 4B5, Canada. ■■

FOOD NETWORK CANADA ▶



EMILY MORGAN, VP, CONTENT

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

While the Food Networks' sched is divided between instructional daytime fare and more entertainment-driven primetime programming, Morgan says, "60-65% of our

commissioning dollars go towards primetime." For both commissioned and acquired programming, strong formats, captivating competitions and great hosts make the grade. Travelogs need to be "gritty and relatable." In general, Morgan says that as the net's audience gets younger year-on-year (currently, Food skews female, with a 25-54 age demo), there's an emphasis on fun programming that can encompass the drama of an *Iron Chef America* or the humor of a *Pitching In*.

SERIES VS. ONE-OFFS:

Food works in half-hour series, but is delving into hour-long segments. Pricing range per hour for commissions is product-dependent, she says. "We have things we pay \$20,000 for and we have things we pay \$100,000 for." The Canwest/Corus/Scripps JV works closely with Food Network and Cooking Channel in the U.S. to explore partnerships.

HOW TO PITCH:

"A log line or one-paragraph descriptor is a good place to start," says Morgan. Tape is fine for talent-oriented pitches. The best contact is Brynn Tschirhart, Food Network Programming Dept., via btschirhart@canwest.com. ■■

GLOBAL ►

HOW HE PROGRAMS:

Each year Global programs roughly 30 hours of factual or documentary programming. One of the prime opportunities for documentaries on the channel is the character-driven, independent doc strand 'Global Currents.'

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

"The environment for documentary and factual is really competitive on a conventional [channel]," says Kot. "And try as we might we're just not getting the huge numbers that drama can." Therefore, Kot and his team are very selective when looking for factual for Global. He wants series, not one-offs, and projects should be populist and accessible to as wide an audience as possible. Global does not commission lifestyle, cooking or travel shows. The network is also currently open to the possibility of making Canadian versions of successful U.S. and UK formats.

WHAT HE PAYS:

The average for Canwest's factual programs is \$100,000 to \$175,000 per hour. While Kot hasn't found many coproductions for Global, he'd be open to the idea, "especially if there's a UK conventional that might want to do something — we would look at that for sure."

HOW TO PITCH:

"What's really important is that [producers] know our networks, they know what's on them, and they know what's working for them," says Kot, regarding not only Global but Canwest's other specialty nets, including History Television and Mystery TV (profiled on the next page). Kot says emailing a couple of pages will do to start. The best person for initial contact is Patricia DiGiovanni, coordinator, factual and drama content (pdigiovanni@canwest.com). ■■



**MICHAEL KOT, VP, FACTUAL CONTENT,
CANWEST MEDIWORKS**

“ What's really important is that producers know our networks ... ”

HISTORY TELEVISION (CANADA) ▶

HOW HE PROGRAMS:

Each year Kot and his team commission roughly 100 hours of factual programming, 40% of which have some element of an international coproduction. Kot says the channel is looking to commission more next year because History Television has had a successful year and budgets will be going up. There is also a couple hundred hours of factual acquired each year for the channel.

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Observational documentary programs are working well for the channel right now, such as *Ice Pilots NWT* which follows an airline in the Canadian North that flies WWII propeller planes.

For an ob-doc, or any other type of factual series, to work for History Television, it should shine a light on history through contemporary characters and events. CGI series, war stories, docudramas and other personality-driven shows such as *William Shatner's Weird or What* also work for History Television, as do genres such as archaeology, ancient history, true crime, engineering, science and technology and innovative social history.

Traditional documentaries work better on History than they do on any of the other channels Kot programs; however, they should not focus on linear recounting of history or talking heads. All programs should be filmed in HD. ■

MYSTERY TV ▶

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Mystery TV is a female-skewing specialty under the Canwest banner, for which Kot programs roughly 20 to 30 hours of original factual per year. The focus of the channel is on crime and unexplained events, so factual programming with a criminal element that is "not too bloody" tends to work best. While crime is key for the channel, Kot says he's trying to branch out into other related genres by bringing in new factual programs such as *The Will*, which follows the intrigue and surprises that occur when someone passes away and the will isn't particularly clear.

The channel is also trying something new with a playful paranormal home show on the slate. The series (*Paranormal Home Inspection*, w/t) will have a paranormal house inspector come in to explain why a family is experiencing bizarre phenomena and then follow that visit with a regular inspection, in which the home inspector will explain the "non-paranormal" causes behind certain creaks and moans coming from the house - settling walls, for example, or a door that has been hung incorrectly. When programming for Mystery, Kot prefers series over one-offs because it's easier to generate a critical mass of viewership around a series, and for series he finds eight to 13 episodes work the best.

WHERE YOU'LL FIND HIM: Kot regularly attends Sunny Side, Realscreen Summit, History Makers and World Congress of Science and Factual Producers. ■

ROOM FOR DOCS:

In fall of 2008 British Columbia's the Knowledge Network rebranded as Knowledge, a 24-hour arts and culture channel, consisting mostly of documentaries and children's programs. In addition to main doc strand 'Storyville,' there are five other doc strands on the channel, including feature strand 'Route 66'; one-hour, artists-doc strand 'Masters;' 'East is East' which looks at the changing Asia-Pacific nations; performing arts strand 'Radio City' and cinema and photography strand 'Aperture.'

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Knowledge had seven major premieres for 2010, including a doc on Canadian women in the military and one on the Vancouver punk music scene. "From a commissioning point of view everything comes in here through 'Storyville' and then it has the ability to migrate to other strands later," he explains.

HOW TO PITCH:

"To a great degree we like to see something on paper and usually we ask for a page or less about the project and intended financing scenario, just to see if the filmmakers have an idea of where they can find the money," says Battle. "It's getting very difficult in Canada to find second windows on projects...so we're always encouraging filmmakers to bring as much as they can to the project and to a certain degree it affects whether we can go ahead with it or not. Our envelope has gone up for the Canada Media Fund this year, so we expect to see a fair amount of production out of B.C." For first window projects contact assistant programmer Caroline Coutts (carolinec@knowledge.ca) and for second windows reach out to program development officer Patrice Ramsay (patricer@knowledge.ca). Producers can also check Knowledge's producer site (www.knowledge.ca/producers) for more pitching information. ||



MURRAY BATTLE, DIRECTOR OF INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION

“ We always encourage filmmakers to bring as much as they can to the project ”

MTV CANADA/MUCHMUSIC ►►

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

The audience for these CTVglobemedia-owned channels is evenly split between male and female aged 12-34. Since both channels target young demos, youth-driven, aspirational programming connects best. While the main focus for factual is on docudrama series commissions, one-off specials can work if they are in line with the youthful, optimistic tone. Rotterman says cynical or sarcastic programming doesn't work. Of course, given the music focus of both channels, music-related content is key.

WHAT'S WORKING:

This broadcast year MTV commissioned two doc series: docudrama *Peak Season* followed a group of young people working the slopes in Whistler, British Columbia and *Over the Bolts* documented Canada's national snowboarding team as they trained for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. Meanwhile, MuchMusic has commissioned the new Banger Films doc series *Metal Evolution*.

HOW TO PITCH:

Email is the best way to communicate, and while tape would be beneficial, it's not required. A one-page description of the project will suffice for both channels. Pitches can be sent to Rotterman at ben.rotterman@ctv.ca. ■■



**BEN ROTTERMAN, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER,
DOCS AND DEVELOPMENT**

►► Sarcastic
and cynical
programming
doesn't work
for these nets

SLICE ►

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

True to form for a cable net with the tagline "My vice is Slice," Case says she's looking for content that "delivers on guilty pleasures programming" for women — entertaining slices of life featuring huge personalities and relatable circumstances. In 2010, the Canwest-owned specialty channel is producing over 100 hours of original content, and with a requirement from the CRTC to air 82.5% CanCon, most of that comes from original productions.

WHAT'S WORKING NOW:

Slice's key demo is the 18-49 age group, with an eye towards the "30-35 sweet spot" and the lifestyle sub-genres that seem to be clicking with it are weddings and finance. Case says the net is also mindful of co-viewing with its programming: "We're very aware that a woman in that age range has other people in her life, be they kids, be it the boyfriend, be it the husband." As for one-offs vs. series, Case says that while she never wants to say "never" regarding one-offs, right now the focus is on drawing people to the net with "series that have a long standing life to them, that have an ongoing story."

**VANESSA CASE, VP, CONTENT****HOW TO PITCH:**

Producers new to Slice should offer up a breakdown of a typical episode, a show summary and a tagline. "If it can't be explained in two lines or less, it's probably too complicated an idea," Case says. Pitches can be sent to Lisa Godfrey, director of original production, via lgodfrey@canwest.com. Note that Godfrey will be on maternity leave starting in October; direct pitches to Case from that point on via vcase@canwest.com. ■■■

TVO ►

**JANE JANKOVIC, COMMISSIONING EDITOR****OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOCS ON TVO:**

'The View from Here' is TVO's singular series for which it commissions original documentaries. For this POV doc strand, Jane Jankovic's team tries to commission anywhere from eight to 10 original hours per year. There are also acquisition and pre-buy opportunities for docs in slots such as social issue strand 'Human Edge,' artistic documentary strand 'Masterworks' and historical doc strand 'History.' The ratio of acquisitions to commissions in primetime is about 14:1.

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

TVO's tagline "Makes you think" is a good indication of its favored programming. "Our audience is educated and very eclectic," says Jankovic. "We know our viewers are smart, well-read, and looking for an alternative to mainstream television." The channel commissions one-off docs and

acquires series, and when it comes to both, what resonates with the audience is "something different and insightful on issues that matter to Canadians." Specifically for commissioned docs Jankovic is looking for POV character-driven stories. While she does take on international stories, they must have Canadian content and resonate with Canadian audiences.

WHAT SHE PAYS:

Jankovic says she pays roughly \$50,000 to \$80,000 per hour.

W NETWORK >

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

The Corus Entertainment-owned W Network skews female but wants to keep other family members in the room, so it opts for broader-based programming. As a result, Bianchi says the home will be a central focus for W in the year ahead. "In addition to real estate, design, and renovation, we're looking at the home beyond that," she offers. "We're also looking at your mortgage, your finances, shopping for your home, entertaining in your home. It's basically, 'home is where the heart is.'" As for the tone of programming, Bianchi says "upbeat, lighthearted, fun, while informative" content is a home run for W, and the net is also interested in dabbling in more dramatic fare. "We might have more competition, more conflict."

WHAT DOESN'T WORK:

"We steer away from anything that is too life-stage focused," says Bianchi. "So anything about parenting or weddings, for example." And in keeping with a broader focus aimed at keeping hubby and kids in the room, the net is also moving away from "things that are a little too female focused," says Bianchi. Thus, programs geared more towards beauty or fashion are a better fit for sister network Cosmo TV. One-offs are also a rarity on the W Network.

HOW TO PITCH:

When pitching to Jankovic, she says a demo or footage of key characters always helps. Proposals should be up to 10 pages in length, and should include information such as the proposed production schedule, a realistic financing plan, a concise treatment and the resumes of the key creative personnel on the project. More pitching information and contacts can be found at tvo.org/documentaries/submissions. ■■



VIBIKA BIANCHI, DIRECTOR OF ORIGINAL PRODUCTIONS

HOW TO PITCH:

Bianchi advises producers to first contact production coordinator Camille Djokoto at camille.djokoto@corusent.com. From there, an informational phone call can be set up with a W production exec who can explain the net's needs more fully. "Once you learn a little more about what we're doing, we move on to sending in one-sheets or pitches or email correspondence with our production executives," says Bianchi. ■■

UNITED KINGDOM

**NICK FRASER, SERIES EDITOR, 'STORYVILLE'****HOW HE PROGRAMS:**

The 'Storyville' team commissions films between 59 minutes and 89 minutes in length, but will occasionally consider longer films as well as 4x30-minute series. The strand has 25 slots per year on BBC Four, and can also pitch to BBC Two for one-off commissions. Fraser says that of the BBC Four slots, roughly three or four are commissioned and all others are pre-bought and coproduced.

"We aim to reach as broad an audience as possible," he says of the strand's ambitions for its films. He says its spring run was its most successful ever in terms of ratings, with docs such as *Sons of Perdition*, *Horses* and *Valentino: The Last Emperor* doing quite well. "We've also had significant awards success with *By the People: The Election of Barack Obama* and *The Red Chapel*," he says.

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Fraser sums up his wish list thusly: "Dynamic, narrative-led, human interest stories from around the world." As a strand that showcases the best in British and international documentary, Fraser says projects

"must be international in subject, and ambitious in stylistic and creative scope. It is a way of bringing the best documentaries in the world 'from anywhere, about anything, by anyone' to a UK audience." Note that 'Storyville' "very rarely" commissions "subject" films, polemics or historical subjects.

WHAT HE PAYS:

"It's rare for the BBC to contribute more than 30% of the budget to any one film," Fraser says. "Often ideas originate at 'Storyville' and we nurture them, working with the filmmakers to help raise all the necessary financing. It's very hard work, but the films would not otherwise exist. However, there is an advantage in this method; it means that films shown on 'Storyville' have distinct editorial voices."

HOW TO PITCH:

In order to provide an idea of the sort of film you're making, send a treatment and a DVD — "a must, even if it's just an assembly of footage," says Fraser. Treatments can be emailed to Shanida Scotland's attention at storyville.mailbox@bbc.co.uk and via BBC's e-Commissioning at <https://ssl.bbc.co.uk/ecommissioning/>. Full information about the electronic commissioning process can be found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/ecomm/>. By snail mail, send materials to Shanida Scotland c/o BBC Storyville, Room 7050, BBC Television Centre, London W12 0RF.

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

Moore commissions more than 200 hours of programming across the four BBC channels, with most of the slots at 8 or 9 pm. About 30 films per year are also commissioned for a 10.35 pm slot on BBC One. Moore says the Beeb is having "real success" with long-form ob-doc and constructed formats, and that "single films are enjoying a rebirth and are growing in popularity." Still, what she'd like to see more of are "genuinely original and innovative treatments and approaches to documentary [such as *Welcome to Lagos* and *Lambing Live*] which take risks and create impact and a sense of event for both audiences and the channels." Ideas must, as she puts it, "feel relevant to people living in Britain today... I'm looking for ideas that will challenge the way we think, confront moral and ethical dilemmas and broaden our horizons and perspectives."

And what doesn't work for her? "I'm not looking for programs which simply hold a mirror up to the contemporary world or could have been made at any time in the last 20 years. Every program we commission must have a clear sense of purpose and proposition."

International producers, take note that, outside of BBC Four's 'Storyville' strand, "the majority of our output is made for the UK audience so opportunities for finding international coproduction money are few and far between."

HOW TO PITCH:

Moore points to the BBC's e-Commissioning system (see Nick Fraser's profile, previous page), followed up by emails to the docs commissioning team to let them know you've submitted. "A taster tape isn't a must have but it certainly helps your idea rise to the top of the pile," she says.



**CHARLOTTE MOORE, COMMISSIONING EDITOR,
DOCUMENTARIES**

“ I'm looking
for ideas that
will challenge
the way we
think ”

BBC (continued) ►



**KIM SHILLINGLAW, COMMISSIONING EDITOR,
SCIENCE & NATURAL HISTORY, BBC**

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

As commissioning editor for science and natural history

across the BBC, Shillinglaw is looking to commission approximately 100 hours of programming per year. She says BBC One needs "ideas which bring spectacle to the channel, make them accessible and popular and tell the most important stories." For BBC Two, science and natural history offerings should offer "genuine factual insight" and "real substance" and for BBC Four, programming should offer "big thinking and alternative viewpoints," with levity and wit being key. She'd also like to see more health-related ideas, "real world" science, female-skewing shows and female talent.

WHAT SHE DOESN'T NEED:

Multi-part landmark series, marine science shows and medical docusops aren't on her wish list.

WHAT SHE PAYS:

Pricing range per hour for commissions, from low-to-high end, is: £180k-£280k on BBC One, £110k-£250k on BBC Two and £90k-£140k on BBC Four. ■■

CHANNEL 4 ►

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

Miralis says 'True Stories,' the doc strand for Channel 4's digital channel, More4, is in the market for "strong international stories [as] 'True Stories' shows a selection of the best international feature documentaries." The strand screens up to 40 titles a year, recent docs aired include *The Cove*, *Rough Aunties*, *Burma VJ* and *Mugabe and the White African*.

WHAT SHE PAYS:

As per Channel 4's producers' site, the budget for the 'True Stories' strand allows for acquisitions and pre-sales up to £40k. "The price range varies for each project," says Miralis. Many of the films in the strand are international copros.

HOW TO PITCH:

Make yourself familiar with the Channel 4 producers' site. "The best way to submit proposals is to register projects online with a one page outline and a link to a trailer," she says. You can also make initial contact at the markets she



**ANNA MIRALIS, COMMISSIONING EDITOR,
'TRUE STORIES' (MORE4)**

attends, which include Sundance, Sheffield Doc/Fest, IDFA, Hot Docs, TIFF and the MIPs.

CHANNEL 4 (continued) ▶



RALPH LEE, HEAD OF SPECIALIST FACTUAL

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

The mandate of Channel 4's specialist factual commissioning department is to find history, science, arts and religion programming. However, Lee says there are some other categories just outside of those genres that are also working for his department. For instance, he's looking for more natural history than ever before because of the success of *Inside Nature's Giants*. "The wilder edge of natural history is interesting to us," he says. He'd also like to see more science programming that livens up that genre the way that *Giants* did for natural history. Topical areas such as business, environment, adventure and archeology also work.

Within the more traditional specialist factual genres, such as history, Lee says commissioner Julie Harrington is always looking for ways to explore history from perspectives that bring forth its relevance to the present day, while for arts, commissioning editor Tabitha Jackson is aiming to refresh the genre by staying away from more traditional fine arts and taking a bold approach by exploring modern art, architecture, dance, fashion and photography. "We're mostly looking for big, adventurous approaches to big subjects," says Lee, with an emphasis on "present-tense programs."

HOW HE PROGRAMS:

Roughly 200 hours of original commissions come out of Lee's department each year, while only 10% of the specialist factual output is acquired. Most of the original commissions are for series, however, they still do 10 to 15 big one-offs each year, many of which are coproduced.

WHAT HE PAYS:

Channel 4 pays roughly £160,000 to £180,000 an hour for specialist factual content, but there are some exceptions to that rule, says Lee. "For licenses and some coproductions we can pay as little as 10% of that, and for some of our more ambitious big productions we might pay two or three times that." Roughly 40 to 50% of C4's factual output has some element of an international coproduction.

HOW TO PITCH:

Producers should email pitches to C4's factual commissioners David Glover (science), Julia Harrington (history), Lucy Pilkington (specialist factual) and Tabitha Jackson (arts). For contact information for each commissioner, and for more pitching information, visit Channel 4's 4Producers site (www.channel4.com/corporate/4producers). ■■

“ The wilder edge of natural history is interesting to us ”

CURRENT TV ►

**LINA PRESTWOOD, DIRECTOR OF CONTENT****WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:**

Prestwood says Current has about 30 hours of factual and doc content to commission annually. The audience, comprised of young professionals in the 25-44 age range, gravitates towards "smart programming," global stories in particular. "Substantial" and "aspirational" are also buzzwords for Current. She prefers series ideas from a commissioning and acquisitions point of view. One-offs aren't ruled out but "they'd have to be quite hard working for us in terms of the noise they create." Copro is a possibility for the right project.

HOW TO PITCH:

Email her at lprestwood@current.com with a brief outline of your idea. "Prove it to me in the body of the email and attach anything else you can," she says. If characters are central to the show, she'll need to see tape. ■■

DISCOVERY NETWORKS (UK) ►

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Korn looks to commission between 150-200 hours of factual and factual entertainment across Discovery's UK nets per year. Ideas with a unique twist in their storytelling (such as *Monsters Inside Me*), epic visual scale (*Stephen Hawking's Universe*), strong presenters (such as Bear Grylls or James Cracknell) and scientific firsts are top of list. "But, above all, we're looking for a spark of uniqueness and originality — the program that you wouldn't see anywhere else but Discovery," says Korn.

WHAT HE PAYS:

"A local production budget can range from £30k to several hundred thousand," he says. "They're generally around the £80-100k per hour mark." While open to copro, "We are generally looking to take first window in the UK."

HOW TO PITCH:

"Brief outlines and one-pagers are fine in the first instance — tape is an enormous advantage," he says. Contacts are Elizabeth McIntyre — vice president, factual programming; Catherine Ball — development producer, factual; Nesta Owens — director, entertainment and lifestyle programming.

**DAN KORN, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAMMING, DISCOVERY NETWORKS UK**

and Victoria Noble — editor, lifestyle.

MARKETS: MIPTV, MIPCOM, and festivals such as Sheffield Doc/Fest and the MediaGuardian Edinburgh International Television Festival. ■■



FIVE



ANDREW O'CONNELL, HEAD OF FACTUAL

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

While many channels strictly look for series, one-off documentaries work well for Five's factual department. The channel is always looking for documentaries to fit its strands such as historical doc strand 'Revealed,' 'Nature Shock,' which focuses on strange occurrences in the natural world and 'Extraordinary People,' which examines what the network calls 'remarkable tales of human experience.' Docs within these strands often lend themselves to coproduction, making up around 20 to 30 hours of Five's factual intake.

"We like to do one-offs, particularly if they are newsworthy, are tied in with an anniversary or have a big celebrity exclusive," says O'Connell. Series also work on the channel, in particular, ob-docs that in some way tell stories of modern day Britain. O'Connell likes series to run anywhere from six to eight episodes. His department commissions roughly 70 hours of original programming per year, making up 70% of its intake. The other 30% comes from acquired docs and series.

Other programming that performs strongly on the channel includes docuserials as well as investigative and intelligent documentaries. O'Connell is looking for docs that target the upmarket male, for which he finds history, engineering, crime and natural history subject matter works well.

PRICE RANGE:

"We cut cloth to fit the idea and budgets are dependent on each project," says O'Connell. However, for commissions and coproductions, prices tend to range between £50,000 and £120,000.

HOW TO PITCH:

O'Connell suggests producers email a one-page proposal and, while teaser tapes are welcomed, they are not essential. More information on the factual commissioning department and what it looks for can be found at about.five.tv/programme-production/commissioning/commissioning-teams/factual. Pitches can be sent to commissioning editor Matt Bennett at matt.bennett@five.tv or commissioning editor Lulu Prutton at lulu.prutton@five.tv.

“We cut
cloth to fit
the idea and
budgets are
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on each
project”

FIVE (continued) ►



STEVE GOWANS, HEAD OF FACTUAL ENTERTAINMENT

HOW HE COMMISSIONS:

By the end of 2010, Five's factual entertainment division will have commissioned over 120 hours of programming, says Steve Gowans. Of that content, the majority is original commissions, while only roughly 10 hours were reversioned acquisitions. Gowans says all acquisitions tend to be reversioned to make them more UK-audience friendly. Most of the content his division commissions has a UK-specific approach, and coproductions are extremely rare.

WHAT FACT ENT WORKS FOR FIVE:

Unlike O'Connell's factual department, Gowans does not look for one-offs very often. When he does, fast turnaround, contemporary pop culture stories work best. Typically he's looking for series that fit into the genres of technology (*Gadget Show*) and big name travelogs (*Extreme Fishing with Robson Green, Rory & Paddy's Great British Adventure*). "[We] would like to see far more constructed doc series ideas that could really break through for us," says Gowans. Most of the programming he commissions for primetime should have a fun, escapist tone.

WHAT HE PAYS:

"Low end £50k per hour, [while the] top end very much depends on the project," says Gowans.

HOW TO PITCH:

When sending pitches to Gowans and his team via email, he expects at least a headline and a paragraph revealing what the project is about. "Tape always helps but isn't a deal breaker," he says. "However, when introducing new talent, a taster will always be needed at some stage." You can reach Gowans at steve.gowans@five.tv and visit about.five.tv/programme-production/commissioning/commissioning-teams/factual for more information on Five's factual entertainment department. ■

“[We]
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JO CLINTON-DAVIS, CONTROLLER OF POPULAR FACTUAL

THE RIGHT MIX: Clinton-Davis says factual producers should be mindful that factual programming can actually be fun, or at least entertaining. "It should be captivating - you

want your documentary to be talked about," she says. She also wants "factual take-home... I'm a great believer in take-out information and things that work on multiple levels."

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

"I'm looking for nine o'clock, nine o'clock, nine o'clock," she emphasizes. "Killer brands that are a mixture of great, hard-fought-for access, that have an appeal for the British audience in some way and have a familiarity." She also has "lightly formatted factual" on her list. Authored journeys such as Martin Clunes' *A Man and His Dogs* and Joanna Lumley's *Nile* are also part of the recipe.

HOW TO PITCH:

"Two lines in an email," says Clinton-Davis. "For ITV, you've got to get it instantly." ITV tends to work with UK indies and of course, its ITV Studios. "If a company from another country comes to pitch to us it's harder... But if it's a great idea we'll take it and make it work." Pitches should go to Katy Thorogood, commissioner for factual and daytime. ■

YESTERDAY, UKTV

WHAT WORKS:

Anniversaries work really well for UKTV's history-focused channel, Yesterday, says Whelton. For example, the channel's recent *Spirit of 1940* series created an umbrella under which she could commission a number of docs on key events across the '40s. Yesterday is looking to commission another season. Series and programs presented by "unexpected historians" such as John Nettles' *The Channel Islands at War* also click for the channel, says Whelton. Of course, World War II-themed docs also work well.

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

To work for Yesterday, ideas should contain personal testimony and should not rely heavily on reconstruction. Whelton is always looking for one-offs, and three and five episode series.

WHAT SHE PAYS:

Ballpark pay per hr. for factual ranges from £45K to £50,000.



CATHERINE WHELTON, COMMISSIONING EDITOR FOR FACTUAL CHANNELS

HOW TO PITCH:

Email is best initially. She'd like to see a short synopsis with some detail on potential contributors, and tape for testimonials. Email: catherine.whelton@uktv.co.uk ■

CANAL+ ►

STRANDS AND SLOTS FOR DOCS:

French pay channel Canal+ currently has five slots for documentary programming — three monthly and two weekly. Of the monthly slots, one focuses on French social issues or, as Cauquelin puts it, "big contemporary concerns of the 21st century," while another airs docs in conjunction with movie programming, pairing them up with flicks featuring similar subject matter. A monthly slot is devoted to feature doc acquisitions cherry-picked from the festival circuit. This year, Canal+ aired *The Cove*, *The September Issue* and *Outrage* among others. Previous acquisitions included *Man on Wire*, *The Day After Peace* and *Thriller In Manila*.

Of the weekly slots, Sunday afternoon's 'New Explorers' strand examines foreign cultures through the eyes of French adventurers, and another slot is devoted to current affairs.

Cauquelin says there haven't been many recent opportunities for coproducing with partners outside of France, with the current focus for international content being on acquired product. When selecting feature docs from international producers, the emphasis is on projects dealing with global issues which contain "new perspectives, fresh ideas and good storytelling."

WHAT DOES AND DOESN'T WORK:

"The editorial [focus] of Canal+ is based on the understanding of the contemporary world," she says. "We are interested in spreading ideas that can contribute to making the world a better place, ideas that we can share with our audience." For the doc strands, one-offs are preferred. Formats and reality-oriented programming aren't part of the picture.



**CHRISTINE CAUQUELIN, DIRECTOR,
DOCUMENTARIES**

HOW TO PITCH:

Initial inquiries containing brief outlines or one-pagers can be sent by mail. Contact commissioning editor Philippe de Bourbon via philippe.debourbon@canal-plus.com or Cauquelin's assistant Corinne Salmon at corinne.salmon@canal-plus.com for further details. ■■

FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS ►

STRANDS AND SLOTS FOR DOCS:

Of France Télévisions' various networks, France 5 airs the most documentary programming, coming in at roughly 375 hours per year. Of that total, there is potential for 40 to 60 hours of internationally initiated coproductions to air. France 5 is a factual channel, and the genres programmed within it are, in order of importance, wildlife (accounting for 40% of acquisitions), discovery, science/technology and environment, social issues and human interest, and current affairs and geopolitics. One-offs and some series are also programmed. The favored program length is 52 minutes, with 90-minute and 26-minute projects working for the discovery, science/tech and current affairs programming.

France 2 invests in roughly 120 hours of documentaries per year, with potential for about six hours of internationally initiated coproductions in its slots as well as possibilities for primetime specials on strong subjects. Slots include 'Grandeur Nature' (wildlife, weekly, 52 minutes), 'Specials' (52 or 90 minutes) and 'Infrarouge' (weekly, 52-minute slot dealing in social, health and investigative subjects — note that this slot rarely features non-French initiated projects).

France 3 also invests in roughly 120 hours of doc programming, with potential for two to three hours of internationally initiated copros for its 'Hors série' slot (90 minutes weekly, largely French).

WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN'T:

Ground-breaking ideas are tops on the list for the France Télévisions group. If your idea lends itself to a transmedia approach, make sure that's in the pitch. Strong history programs have worked well and have crossed age barriers. Also keep France Télévisions' public service remit in mind when pitching, and note that presenter-led programs and reality aren't good fits.



CAROLINE BEHAR, HEAD OF ACQUISITIONS AND INTERNATIONAL COPRODUCTIONS

►► Ground-breaking ideas are tops on the list for France Télévisions

FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS (CONTINUED) ►

WHAT THEY PAY:

Coproductions and pre-buys can fetch in the range of €50 — 100K per hour, while acquisitions are in the €9,500 — 11,000 per hour range. Two-thirds of the group's programming consists of original production; one-third, acquisition. The group invested roughly €80 million in docs for 2010.

HOW TO PITCH:

Caroline Behar (caroline.behar@francetv.fr) is head of international coproductions for the France Télévisions group, and all international projects go through her and her team, regardless of which network they are for. When pitching coproductions, pre-buys or acquisition projects, head of international development Ann Julienne says it's best to send a one-pager by email to Behar or one of her team members. Don't send tape or DVD unless asked for one, and fuller treatments will be requested if the one-pager strikes a chord.

Contacts for Behar's team include: Thierry Mino, deputy head (thierry.mino@francetv.fr); Coraline Roch (coraline.roch@francetv.fr, replacing Perrine Poubeau, who's on maternity leave) and Laurent Flahault (laurent.flahault@francetv.fr). Other commissioning editors include deputy head of documentaries Fabrice Puchault, head of history Dana Hastier and Hervé Guérin, science and Clémence Coppey, history. Julienne says when in doubt, drop her a line at ann.julienne@francetv.fr as she can direct producers to the right person on Behar's team, or recommend a potential French production partner.



ANN JULIENNE, HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WHERE TO FIND THEM:

France Télévisions' team covers a veritable slew of markets, among them: Realscreen Summit, MIPTV, MIPCOM, Sunny Side of the Doc, Jackson Hole, FIPA, Sheffield Doc/Fest, HistoryMakers, IDFA, WCSFP, BBC Showcase and HotDocs. ■

GERMANY

ARD/MDR

HOW SHE PROGRAMS:

MDR is part of the ARD, Germany's consortium of regional public service broadcasters. Schreiner says the Leipzig-based MDR commissions roughly 30 hours of original documentary programming a year. Her department focuses specifically on historical and cultural docs, with an emphasis on author-driven films and high-end docudramas. She's mainly looking for one-offs with room for 45-minute docs in primetime and docs up to 90 minutes in late-night.

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

The target audience for MDR's documentaries is female and over 50. Schreiner says she prefers emotional storytelling and while history docs are a big part of MDR's mandate, she's not looking for encyclopedic history docs.

HOW TO PITCH:

Schreiner prefers a brief outline of the project accompanied by a



**CLAUDIA SCHREINER, HEAD OF PROGRAMMING,
HISTORY, CULTURE AND SCIENCE**

link to some video and a profile of the filmmaker. If you're planning to pitch her in person, or send a package via snail mail, she wants to see tape. She is reachable at claudia.schreiner@mdr.de. 

PRO SIEBEN

KLAUS PROFF, HEAD OF DOCUMENTARIES & DIGITAL STRATEGIES

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Slots for finished docs and pre-buys are available on ProSieben's movie and entertainment channel, kabel eins. Commissions, however, are more likely on Sat.1 and ProSieben. Proff says he looks for six to eight-part series targeted at 30 to 49-year-old males. "Due to the fact that Germany is a very special market, most of the commissioned programs are produced by German producers or bigger companies with an office in Germany," he says. Still, ProSieben and Sat.1 coproduce around two to four hours per year. The channels mostly work with the UK, Canada or the U.S. with a focus on "event docs."

As for kabel eins, Proff says fast-paced nature and wildlife shows, adventure programming, history docs and male-targeted fare are preferred.

HOW TO PITCH:

Proff prefers a short outline and, if the program has aired in other territories, basic ratings and performance info as well. Details about budget and any expected copro partners are a must. Tape is useful but not a necessity. Contact Katja Hofem-Best, SVP factual (katja.hofembest@prosiebensat1.com) or Jobst Bentheues, SVP entertainment (jobst.benthueus@prosiebensat1.com). 

**WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR:**

As the commercial arm of German public broadcaster ZDF, ZDF Enterprises functions on three levels when it comes to the international factual market. First, as Hollstein explains, "We act as an intermediary between the international market and ZDF, and so producers with projects who may not know who to approach at ZDF might go through us and then we would guide the projects through to the right people." Secondly, it invests in some coproductions with ZDF and is on the lookout for international partners to cofinance them. And thirdly, it's looking for projects from the international market, especially series, for both its international and German-speaking distribution catalogs.

Now that we have that straight, what is ZDF — the channel — looking for in factual and documentary? A lot, apparently, as the pubcaster airs several doc strands, including two in primetime that Hollstein says are the best destinations for international producers looking to work with ZDF. Sundays at 7.30pm, the 'Terra X' strand (formerly known as 'ZDF Expeditions') incorporates ancient history, archaeology and expeditions and is comprised of 60% commissions, 10% ZDF productions and 30% coproductions and acquisitions. The Tuesday night slot, 'Tuesday Documentaries,' features a mix of contemporary history and current affairs, as well as wider ranging history and science topics that are more conducive to coproduction (history and science docs in the slot are 60% in-house productions and commissions and 40% coproductions and acquisitions). Producers should also take note of satellite channel 3sat and free digital channel ZDFneo, which offers a mix of factual entertainment, docs, fiction, music and comedy for a 25-49 age demo.

And of course, there's ZDF/ARTE, the joint venture between ZDF, ARD and French culture channel ARTE. ZDF supplies approximately 1,000 hours per year to ARTE, and over 40% of those programs are new productions created as coproductions with ZDF and aired by ARTE. Documentaries represent about 40% of ARTE's total programming or approximately 530 hours annually, plus close to 300 hours within the theme evenings.



**KRISTINA HOLLSTEIN, DIRECTOR,
COPRODUCTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT,
DOCUMENTARIES, ZDF ENTERPRISES**

HOW TO PITCH:

While there isn't a standardized submission process or an online portal, there is one document available at ZDF Enterprises' documentary online home, <http://www.zdf-enterprises.de/en/documentaries.85.htm>, you shouldn't be without. Be sure to download the 'Documentaries airing on ZDF' brochure, as it will provide you with contact phone numbers and names for the assorted commissioning editors at the channel, as well as relevant contacts at 3sat, ZDFneo and ZDF/ARTE. Prof. Dr. Guido Knopp (ph. -49 [0] 6131-70 2020) heads the department of contemporary history for ZDF; Alexander Hesse looks after the department of history and society (-49 [0] 6131-70 2212) and Peter Arens (-49 [0] 6131-70 2200) heads up culture and science. Hollstein recommends you provide commissioning editors with a good summary of the project, detailing unique access and characters, as well as production partners. "A good trailer or reference film helps," she adds. If you look through the brochure and are still unsure about who to contact, email her at kristina.hollstein@zdf-enterprises.de.



WESTERN EUROPE

DRTV (DENMARK) ▶



METTE HOFFMANN MEYER, HEAD OF DOCUMENTARIES AND COPRODUCTIONS

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

DRTV has a broad programming remit, but there are changes afoot at the Danish broadcaster. History programming is moving from DR 2 to DR K as its main hub, which leaves DR 2's door open for more lifestyle, adventure and travel shows. "This [programming] should be fresh and engaging with an edge," says Hoffmann Meyer.

DR K, the culture and history offshoot of DR, is looking for more arts and entertainment programming. "We will also be looking for more lifestyle and documentary/factual that is fun and interesting. [where] we learn something but have fun doing so," she adds.

Hoffmann Meyer says she buys some 1,100 hours per year for the four channels and commissions approximately 100 hours.

HOW TO PITCH:

Interested producers are invited to contact Hoffmann Meyer herself. She prefers brief outlines of the basic idea and names of the director and producers. Also be sure to include

whether the project already has a main commissioning editor attached and which broadcaster is involved. "This indicates the style of the program and the editorial control," she says.

WHERE DRTV INVESTS:

The priority for Hoffmann Meyer is to fully finance Danish content, as not many broadcasters invest in Danish-language stories, but there is still a little room for international original content to be funded.

"If the story needs support and would not otherwise be made, such as *The Milosevic Trial* and *The Trial of Saddam Hussein*, then it would be taken into consideration," she says. She notes that a lot of politically-oriented stories from the U.S. are not receiving homegrown financing and those are the types of films she's interested in.

Additionally, countries that don't have a good local support base for documentary film are viable for DRTV, and Hoffmann Meyer cites Chinese films such as *Please Vote for Me* and *The Biggest Chinese Restaurant in the World* as good examples of docs that would be of interest.

WHERE TO FIND HER:

Hoffmann Meyer attends markets such as MIPCOM, MIPDoc, IFP, CPH DOX and festivals such as the Sundance Film Festival, Sheffield Doc/Fest and IDFA. She also frequents BBC showcases and every other year goes to China, Italy and France for screenings. ■■



ARI YLA-ANTTILA, COMMISSIONING EDITOR

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Yla-Anttila commissions for six one-hour slots at YLE TV1: current affairs/economy; science; history; wildlife/animals/nature; adventure/travel and politics/social issues. Altogether the channel has approximately 245 hours of original programs per year, 80% of which are acquired and 20% commissioned.

He looks for one-off docs at the 58 minutes-and-under mark, and on occasion, 28 minutes as well. The YLE TV1 audience is mainly 35-years-old and over and it values good journalism, clear structure, fresh angles and sophistication. Narration, if necessary, is OK. A few examples of coproductions or pre-buys which have worked well on the channel include *The World According to Monsanto* (Image & Compagnie), *Seeds of Hunger* (Icarus Films), *The Dark Side of Chocolate* (DR) and *Einsatzgruppen* (Kuiv Productions).

Looking ahead, Yla-Anttila says they are interested in short series of up to six episodes. Sometimes 90-minute films are split into two 45-minutes pieces with agreement from the director.

HOW TO PITCH:

Pitches go to either Yla-Anttila (ari.yla-anttila@yle.fi), channel controller Riitta Pihlajamäki (riitta.pihlajamaki@yle.fi) or the head of coproductions at YLE, Erkki Astala (erkki.astala@yle.fi). They can be contacted via mail, at Box 97, 00024 Yleisradio Finland for Pihlajamäki and Ylä-Anttila and Box 96 for Astala.

It's suggested to pitch with about two pages and, if possible, a teaser. Include all the relevant major details: a description of the subject, director, budget, financing plan and delivery schedule. Highlight the main points and strengths in your projects.

HOW NOT TO PITCH:

Don't try to press too hard. "Don't pitch very local subjects that don't travel if you look at them honestly," advises Yla-Anttila. Don't under-budget or over-budget them. Find the "big partner" with the money first.

BUDGETS:

"The times are hard and getting harder," he says. The range is from €2,000-6,000 per hour, and sometimes higher, but that is really an exception.

MARKETS HE ATTENDS:

MIPDoc, Sunny Side of the Doc and IDFA are the key markets, but YLE attends many more markets and festivals during the year. ■■■



YLE TV2 (FINLAND) ➤

IINKA VEHKALAHTI, COMMISSIONING EDITOR

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

YLE TV2 has several strands for non-fiction programming, which include TV2 Documentaries (Dokumentiprojekti) for late Wednesday events with a retransmission on Sunday afternoons throughout the year, and *Kolmasulottuvuuks.fi* (The Third Dimension), which looks for reality TV series, one-off docs or travelling and acquired programming only.

While the bulk of commissions are reserved for Finnish films, accounting for 35%, YLE TV2 does international commissions as well.

The main strand that Vehkalahti wants content for, TV2 Documentaries, is in "desperate need" of exceptional documentaries and he advises that producers visit the YLE website, yle.fi/dokumenttiprojekti. He says the broadcaster's audience is composed of well-educated, active, influential adults in the 45-year-old age range. Some recent documentaries that have fared well for YLE TV2 include *Steam of Life*, Werner Herzog's *Grizzly Man*, *Born in the USSR*, *Recipes for Disaster*, *Shock Doctrine* and *Defamation*.

YLE TV2 acts as a main commissioner, with €40,000-60,000 for Finnish films and sometimes coproductions, usually through a Finnish coproducer who can apply for money from the Film Foundation, at a maximum amount of €10,000. YLE TV2 pays €5,000-8,000 for pre-buys and buys for €3,000-6,000. The network is looking for one-offs.

HOW TO PITCH:

Vehkalahti says that for TV2 Documentaries, it's best to pitch docs face to face, at markets (see below), and pitchers should have a proper treatment and screening tape. For The Third Dimension, YLE TV2 only acquires and does not pre-buy.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

"Don't call if you don't have my personal cell and even then send [an email] first," he says. He is also an advocate of the "show, don't tell" method. Doing a little homework on Google is also advised before pitching, to ensure that the film or project is the type of program that YLE TV2 broadcasts.

MARKETS HE ATTENDS:

IDFA, Sunny Side, IFP, Hot Docs, Sheffield, Leipzig, DocEdge, different EDN events. ■■

“
Don't
call if you
don't have
my personal
cell and
even then,
email first”



AVRO (NETHERLANDS) ►

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

Arts documentaries for AVRO's documentary slot, called 'Close Up' are a priority. The slot fills 26 hours a year for the public broadcaster with a strong focus on arts and culture.

AVRO coproduces approximately 18 documentaries, has four pre-sales and about four acquisitions per year. It is only looking for one-offs, at 52-minutes in length. Huijbregts says the public broadcasting association has many international partners.

The target for the doc slot is 250,000 viewers and the best-watched programs tend to have subjects that are well-known by the audience.

HOW TO PITCH:

Huijbregts says AVRO likes to receive a short synopsis — one page works — and from there the commissioning editors determine whether they are interested and want to talk further. Pitches should be sent to marijke.huijbregts@avro.nl. She suggests that a trailer helps, and that it can be a stream since DVD is not necessary.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Huijbregts says that AVRO puts approximately €3,000-5,000 into an acquisition. The broadcaster pays between €6,000-10,000 in a pre-sale, and can put between €10,000-15,000 into a coproduction.

WHERE TO FIND HER:

The AVRO team can be found at MIPDoc, Sunny Side of the Doc, Hot Docs, IDFA, DocFest, Italian Doc, Doc Leipzig, Le Rendez Vous, Lisbon Doc, MiraDoc, East Silver Market and more. ■



MARIJKE HUIJBREGTS, COMMISSIONING EDITOR, DOCUMENTARIES



VPRO (NETHERLANDS) ►

PETRA VERMEULEN, VPRO DOCUMENTAIRES

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

Vermeulen looks for character-driven, creative documentaries for the VPRO Holland Doc slot. The slot has 16 hours per year for its commissioned programming, 12 of which are for national docs, and four of which are for international docs.

Vermeulen says it's most important to bring projects to the table with inspiring universal contemporary experiences. She is looking for character-led films that look and feel current, with a clear dramatic development and narrative urgency that inspires people. "We want films that lead to a 'lean forward experience,' something that triggers the viewer to want to see it, or even better, experience it," she says.

She also adds that it's public broadcaster VPRO's mission to bring the best universal, international stories made by Dutch filmmakers to the world and to coproduce with

international filmmakers to create a healthy industry based on "reciprocal coalitions with our financial partners."

Politics, current affairs, history and culture are dealt with in other slots within VPRO.

"The VPRO takes its public task seriously but with slight stubbornness, purposefully choosing those programmers and topics that the other broadcasting companies pass over," she says, which is good news for those who have pitched to, and been declined by, other broadcasters.

HOW TO PITCH TO HER:

Send proposals (preferably one-pagers) by e-mail to VPRO Documentaries, attention of Petra Vermeulen, email: p.vermeulen@vpro.nl.

WHERE TO FIND HER:

MIPDOC, European Broadcasting Union, Doc Leipzig, Sheffield and IDFA. ■

“ We want films that lead to a ‘lean forward experience’ ”

RTI SPA - MEDIASET GROUP ►



DANIELA BAGLIANI, ACQUISITIONS AND COPRODUCTIONS MANAGER, FACTUAL & DOCUMENTARY DEPT.

SOME BACKGROUND:

RTI SpA - Mediaset Group's networks include three analog TV channels, three minor, targeted digital-only free-to-air channels and a Pay TV offering of various channels. When it comes to acquiring or coproducing factual content, it's the three main TV channels and their six strands sellers will primarily be dealing with. Canale 5 is the main channel, with a family audience at the core. Thus, says Bagliani, buying for the channel is focused on "super-blue-chip wildlife series, possibly with special effects or state-of-the-art shooting techniques," or docudramas that will be of interest to a family audience and that are big enough to compete with entertainment offerings on other networks.

Italia 1 skews younger, and the factual programming that works best for it includes mystery/paranormal (such as ITV's *The Truth Behind...*), action-oriented series (such as Discovery's *Man vs. Wild*) or somewhat left-of-center programs dealing with interesting subject matter

(such as Cineflix's *Urban Legends*). The third analog channel, Rete 4, has a more mature audience that favors contemporary history, religion and wildlife.

COPRO OPPORTUNITIES:

Bagliani says RTI SpA-Mediaset Group is keen on coproduction, "as we believe this helps in giving more breadth to the subject with a more international approach, and by allowing the producer to work with a bigger budget, we in the end get a more ambitious film/series more suitable for a commercial network like us." For a copro to work, it should have strong Italian content, or subject matter of a universal importance that's suitable for a family audience in primetime.

HOW TO PITCH:

Send emails to both Bagliani (daniela.bagliani@mediaset.it) and to her colleague Mauro Fabbricotti (mauro.fabbricotti@mediaset.it) that include a one-page proposal, the budget, the production schedule and info on other confirmed or potential coproducers. They will then follow up if interested.

HOW NOT TO PITCH:

Take care to isolate the projects that you think would be most relevant to Bagliani given the information above. And take heed of this anecdote: "Once I was pitched a very long series on the history of one country, unfortunately not so relevant for the Italian audience. I immediately told the producer it was not suitable for us but he went on and on with his pitch trying to convince me I was wrong. I never accepted to meet him again."

WHERE TO FIND HER:

Bagliani's annual market stops include Realscreen Summit, MIPCOM and MIPTV, WCSFP History Makers, and Sunny Side of the Doc. ■



AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION ▶



ALAN ERSON, HEAD OF DOCUMENTARIES

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Erson took over the head of documentaries position at ABC in mid-August and says ABC is "keen to connect with a wide, primetime audience." He says ABC1, in particular, looks for series with family appeal, citing transformational journeys and "subjects that really hit the Australian zeitgeist." Among the homegrown titles that have scored on ABC1 are *Dick Smith's Population Puzzle*, *The Making of Modern Australia*, and *Voyage to the Planets*. For free-to-air digital channel ABC2, the audience skews more towards younger males. The ratio between acquired and original documentary production is roughly 25% original and 75% acquired, with documentary encompassing contemporary, history, natural history, science, indigenous and religion and ethics genres.

COPRO POSSIBILITIES:

ABC coproduces regularly with an assortment of international partners. "Our full pre-sales need to go to an Australian production company and those companies make deals with international producers, broadcasters and others," Erson explains. Genres that lend themselves to

coproduction include history, natural history and science, but the recent copro with RTE, *Addicted to Money*, "shows that it can be done with a contemporary, presenter-led project too."

HOW TO PITCH:

Erson says the best method is to send ABC's development producer, Edwina Waddy (waddy.edwina@abc.net.au) a two-to-four page outline of the film, which also addresses where you see it working in ABC's schedule. "We encourage producers to come to us relatively early in the piece to get a steer on whether there are already competing projects in that subject area," he says. More details can be found at http://www.abc.net.au/tv/independent/documentary_proposal.htm.

For acquisitions, producers should contact new acquisitions manager Alison Baker (baker.alison@abc.net.au) or acquisitions coordinator Naz Mantoo (naziath@abc.net.au).

WHERE TO FIND HIM:

Erson attends AIDC (Australian International Documentary Conference), WCSFP and Wildscreen/Jackson Hole. Other team members attend various international markets. ■■■

SPECIAL BROADCASTING SERVICE (SBS) **WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:**

SBS' ratio between acquired and commissioned programming stands at 65:35, and regular slots for the 30-40 hours commissioned yearly include a science season in the summer and Sunday history slot. History, science and contemporary social issues are the subjects to pitch. Keep in mind that all commissions must have Australian content and "reflect our charter." With its audience demo in the 40-60 age range, Godfrey says, "Our commissioned factual programs should provoke debate and push boundaries." Short-run series and targeted one-offs are preferred.

WHAT'S WORKING:

Godfrey cites *Who Do You Think You Are?* as the top factual program airing on SBS. The multicultural public broadcaster is also keen to coproduce, with recent coproduction partners including BBC Scotland, ARTE and More4.

HOW TO PITCH: Godfrey would prefer that you send brief



JOHN GODFREY, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, FACTUAL

outlines and tape if characters and/or talent are important to your production to Hazel Cho at Hazel.Cho@sbs.com.au. You can find Godfrey at WCSFP, AIDC and Sunny Side.



VINCENT BEASLEY, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, FACTUAL ENTERTAINMENT

THE SBS FACT ENT AUDIENCE:

When it comes to fact ent, Beasley estimates that the amount of acquired content is "at least 80 or 90%." With SBS being a public broadcaster, he says the audience is wide-ranging, with different

people tuning in at different times (although the target age demo is 35). He breaks the SBS audience into the following categories: the "cultural information seekers" who "like to be informed as they're entertained," the "entertain me" audience that skews younger, often with families and drawn to shows such as *Man vs. Wild* or *MythBusters* and fans of global sports that also love cult TV programs such as *Entourage* or *Mad Men*.

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Beasley says commissioned content should have "some Australian angle, preferably a multicultural focus, a contemporary feel." The talent/competition/game show side of fact ent isn't generally of interest for the network, and neither are kids' programs or arts shows. Budgets can range from AU\$30k to \$300k; keep in mind that SBS would need to acquire government funding or find copro partners for the top end of that scale.

HOW TO PITCH:

Get familiar with the network's tone before pitching. Pitches can be sent to Eniko Toth, SBS Commissioned Content, Locked Bag 028 Crows Nest NSW 1585.  18

AETN ALL ASIA NETWORKS ▶

THE BREAKDOWN:

Three networks reside under the AETN All Asia umbrella: History, Bio [The Biography Channel] and CI [Crime and Investigation Network]. Schofield says that while a high percentage of the content for the three comes from AETN International, History has approximately 20% of its total hours sourced from third-party distributors and another five percent is produced locally (or is Asian content coproduced internationally). Bio and CI acquire higher percentages; between 30-35% on each, as well as producing at least five percent locally.

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

Schofield says she's been seeing high interest on CI for "single-story, retrospective, investigative crime stories; as opposed to on-the-beat, cop ob-docs," citing *48 Hours Mystery* from CBS as an example. For Bio, a surprising ratings success was the 3x1-hour special *The World's Greatest Musical Prodigies*, which Schofield thinks had an aspirational quality that clicked. For History, she says distributors and coproducers shouldn't narrowcast when considering the network and points interested parties towards historyasia.com to get a sense of what's airing. "You'll see that the History brand has evolved and the programming has a breadth that obviously translates into what we acquire — more than war, ancient and modern history," she says. "History is yesterday, today and tomorrow so the brand relates in more ways than you may assume." Note that for original production pitches, "we are only looking to coproduce or commission Asian content, across all three of our brands. So if the idea is not Asian, we would love to see it [but] as a potential acquisition only."



**MICHELE SCHOFIELD, VICE PRESIDENT,
PROGRAMMING AND PRODUCTION**

HOW TO PITCH:

Across all the brands, finished programs for acquisition consideration should be addressed to the company's manager of program acquisitions, Angie Yong, at Angie.Yong@aetnallasia.com [Ph: +65 6837 8934]. DVD screeners or online screening is required for review. Pitches for coproduction or commission should be addressed to Schofield via Michele.Schofield@aetnallasia.com [Ph: +65 6837 8922]. "For initial consideration, we would require a one to two page summary with total budget, any other broadcasters already on board, and remaining financing required. More info will be requested as required."

WHERE TO FIND HER:

Schofield and Yong attend MIPDOC, MIPTV, MIPCOM and the Asian Television Forum in Singapore regularly. ■

DISCOVERY NETWORKS ASIA-PACIFIC (DNAP) ➤

**VIKRAM CHANNA, VICE PRESIDENT,
PROGRAMMING, INDIA & HEAD OF PRODUCTION
ASIA-PACIFIC**

SOME BACKGROUND:

Seven channels are under the Discovery Networks Asia-Pacific (DNAP) umbrella: Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, Discovery Science, Discovery HD World, Discovery Turbo, Discovery Home & Health and beginning in September, TLC (replacing Discovery Travel & Living). Discovery Channel is the number one international channel in Asia-Pacific, reaching 132 million viewers monthly, according to Discovery Communications. Channa says local productions contribute 10-15% of programming commitments yearly across all the networks. As for coproduction, Channa says the door is open, "provided that the content is relevant and has appeal to viewers in our region. Several of our successful local productions such as *Man Made Marvels*, *Revealed* and *First Time Filmmakers* are borne out of strategic coproduction partnerships." While age demos vary across networks, Channa says the core is adults, 25-34. And while the networks are increasingly series-focused, Channa says specials are still in demand for Discovery Channel and Animal Planet. Series tend to run between five and 13 eps.

HOW TO PITCH:

"Sales pitches should be quick and to the point, focusing on the key topics and elements of the programs and why they would suit our networks," says Channa. Provide details on available territories, delivery and format. For original productions, send along treatments, approximate production budgets, episodic breakdowns and taster tapes if any. For acquisitions, send synopses, episodic details and screeners of the completed programs. Send these materials through to vice president of programming Charmaine Kwan (charmaine_kwan@discovery.com) and planning and sourcing manager Lynn Ng (lynn_ng@discovery.com).

WHAT NOT TO DO:

"Don't inundate us with too much background information from the onset," warns Channa. "Be concise and clear about the premise of your project and demonstrate your ability to convey this story for television." That means if you have amazing access, let them know. Also, "don't pitch us a 'compelling idea or story' without having figured out whether it will make a compelling TV program."

WHERE TO FIND THEM:

"We usually attend MIPTV, Asian Television Forum and Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC)." ■

“Don’t inundate us with too much background information from the onset... Be concise and clear”

NHK (JAPAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION) ▶



**KENICHI IMAMURA, SENIOR PRODUCER,
INTERNATIONAL ACQUISITION**

SOME BACKGROUND:

NHK currently has five channels: two terrestrial and three satellite. NHK also has considerable in-house production capabilities so across the board, it acquires or coproduces approximately 200 factual programs a year, which averages out to 15% of its total factual and documentary output.

Imamura says there are three slots that are applicable for acquired or coproduced factual programming and documentary. 'World Documentary' is a one-hour, daily slot on satellite station NHK-BS1. It's the main slot for acquisitions, but limited amounts of coproductions are aired as well. Current affairs, modern history and arts programs fit the bill, and the slot calls for about 100 programs per year. 'HD Special' is a 90-minute slot on satellite that requires approximately 30 programs per year. Here's where you'll find what Imamura calls "big productions that aim to open up a new horizon in the field of visual creation using cutting-edge shooting techniques." The strand airs coproductions and acquisitions. Lastly, 'Dramatic Planet' is a 40-minute, weekly slot airing on a terrestrial channel that only deals in acquisitions, airing about 40 per year. "We are looking for docs that are fit for family viewing, like ancient history, culture, science, space, adventure, wildlife, et cetera," says Imamura.

Recent acquisitions that have done well for NHK include *The Wonderful World of Albert Kahn* [BBC], *Rabbit à la Berlin* [MS Films] and *The Choir - Boys Don't Sing* [twenty twenty productions]. Recent coproductions include *Clash of the Continents* [with NHNZ], *Waterlife* [with NFB & Primitive Entertainment] and *Apocalypse: The Second World War* [with France Télévisions, CC&C].

HOW TO PITCH:

Send one-page outlines via email. Short treatments and demos of three to four minutes will suffice. For the 'World Documentary' slot, there's an English website where interested parties can see what's been acquired in the recent past and send inquiries. That's at <http://www.nhk.or.jp/wdoc/eng/>. There's also an English website devoted to coproductions at <http://www.nhk.or.jp/co-pro/e/slots/index.html>. For copros, Imamura offers this advice: "When we look for coproductions, we generally are looking for programs that our own crew would not be able to shoot. So programs with new findings, exclusive access, innovative directing styles, et cetera are the kinds of things that would interest us."

Also, for Asian producers, once a year NHK holds The Asian Pitch, held in conjunction with the Media Development Authority in Singapore. Asian producers can submit their proposals online at http://www.caldecottproductions.com/tap/index_jp.html. Don't send long treatments or trailers that opt for style over substance.

WHERE TO FIND THEM:

Imamura and his team attend MIPTV and MIPCOM, Hot Docs, Sunny Side of the Doc, Sheffield Doc/Fest, IDFA, Guangdong International Documentary Film Festival China. Mika Kanaya, producer for international coproductions, also attends the Realscreen Summit, as well as other NHK executives. ■

INTERNATIONAL

DISCOVERY NETWORKS LATIN AMERICA ►

WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:

Silberwasser oversees content for Discovery's networks operating in the LatAm region, as well as expanding and managing Discovery's Spanish-language offerings in the U.S. Hispanic market, including the Discovery en Español and the Discovery Familia channels. He says close to 100 hours of original factual content air on those Latin American nets, culled from commissioned global Discovery programming, local commissions and targeted acquisitions. He says some nets, such as the female skewing Liv and Discovery Kids, have a higher degree of acquisitions than other nets like the flagship channel or Animal Planet. "For Latin America specifically, we want to be able to tell a great story or stories that have taken place in the region, that deal with current events or historical events — that is what we are looking for," he says. He adds that there is a focus on content coming from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Chile and the US Hispanic market. In terms of factual acquisitions or new series pitches, programs that feature active, immersive experiences and strong characters (such as *Man vs. Wild* or *River Monsters*) are sought after.

HOW TO PITCH:

As with all Discovery networks, the producer's portal (<https://producers.discovery.com>) should be your first stop. Silberwasser says you can also reach out to Michela Giorelli, VP of production and development for Discovery Latin America/U.S. Hispanic at michela_giorelli@discovery.com. Be sure to identify which genre you are targeting with your pitch: factual, kids or lifestyle. ■■



LUIS SILBERWASSER, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF CONTENT, DISCOVERY NETWORKS LATIN AMERICA/US HISPANIC; HEAD OF CONTENT, DISCOVERY NETWORKS INTERNATIONAL

“ We want to tell great stories that have taken place in the region... ”



SCRIPPS NETWORKS INTERNATIONAL ▶

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR:

Scripps' international division is launching food and lifestyle channels in various markets, using a mix of programming from the domestic networks [Food Network, HGTV, DIY, and Cooking Channel], acquired programs, and commissioned series and specials. Thus far, Scripps Networks International has launched Food Network in the UK, EMEA and Asia (Singapore) and FLN EMEA. Some of the Scripps family's highest rated shows in the US — *Chopped*, *Iron Chef America* and *Barefoot Contessa* among them - have also been hits in the UK. "Our main focus right now is food although we'll soon be looking for more lifestyle programming," says Iwata. "Although we would prefer full commissions, we have limited budgets so are open to coproductions with production companies, distributors, and our domestic channels."

Iwata adds that in addition to long-form programs, "we are commissioning short form interstitials that highlight chefs and talent from around the world. We use these to introduce new talent regionally and to add entertaining 'filler' between programs."

HOW TO PITCH:

With most food shows being talent driven, it's good to have tape to send with the pitch. "The exception would be competition ideas since they usually involve discovering new talent," she says. An awareness of the programming on Scripps' domestic U.S. nets is also a plus, as is a good knowledge of global trends in lifestyle programming.

WHERE TO FIND HER:

Realscreen Summit, MIPTV, MIPCOM, Banff and NATPE. ■■



MARY ELLEN IWATA, VP OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMING

“ We'll soon be looking for more lifestyle programming ”

SUNDANCE CHANNEL INTERNATIONAL ►**WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR:**

Sundance Channel's international services air 65% acquired content, with the remaining 35% coming from Sundance Channel U.S. and other Rainbow Media sister services. "Sundance Channel has an independent-minded audience with an eye for high-quality, independent production that ultimately celebrates independent thinking, ranging from indie films to docs and doc series that attempt to step outside the mainstream via the perspective of the director/producer, the subject matter, or the execution," says Gronenthal. He cites shows such as *Design Star* and *The Fabulous Beekman Boys* as examples of popular Sundance fare.

HOW TO PITCH:

Send pitches to Gronenthal via Louise Boscaino, laboscaino@rainbow-media.com. "Outlines and one-pagers are best," he says. "Tape — if you have it — is even better."

HOW NOT TO PITCH:

"It's always a good idea to actually listen to what we're looking for and don't try to program the channel for us," Gronenthal says. "Distributors and producers often come to us with specific programs to pitch, which prompts them to not hear what we're saying, and that — in turn — shuts down what could be good conversation about other programs and ideas."

MARKETS:

MIPTV and MIPCOM, with other markets hit "a bit more randomly." ■



**HAROLD GRONENTHAL, SVP & GENERAL
MANAGER, RAINBOW MEDIA GLOBAL**

“ Listen to what we’re looking for; don’t try to program the channel for us ”



NOTES



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